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ACTION ARA-15
INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00
DOE-17 DOEE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01
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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE NIACT 2102
INFO AMEMBASSY BRODGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
USINT HAVANA
C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 2465
E.O.12065: GDS 4/2/86 (LAWRENCE L) OR-AMB
TAGS: PINT, JM
SUBJECT: ELECTIONS PROBABLY IN MIDSUMMER

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY RB DATE 25 JUN 1982
RDS ☐ or XD ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. RE.SON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKING ☐
D.C.A. STATED RELEASABLE ☒
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

1. (C-BEGIN SUMMARY: LEADERS OF BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE NOW ENDORSED THE IDEA OF HAVING AN EARLY (JULY-AUGUST) ELECTION AND NOT USING THE VOTER ID SYSTEM CONTRACTED FOR. WE CAUTION THAT THIS SEEMS TO BE A UNILATERAL DECISION BY MANLEY, AND THE LEFT WING OF HIS PARTY HAS NOT NECESSARILY AGREED TO AN EARLY ELECTION. END SUMMARY.,.
2. (U) THE POLITCIAL PARTIES HAVE APPARENTLY AGREED AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE, TO THE HOLDING OF A GENERAL ELECTION EARLIER THAN ORIGIANLLY SCHEDULED-- POSSIBILY AS EARLY AS JULY. THE DISCUSSIONS ON THIS ISSUE ARE TAKING PLACE VIA A PUBLIC FRONT -PAGE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE PARTY LEADERS (WHO HAVE

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NOT ACTUALLY MET, TO OUR KNOWLEDGED)
2. (U) OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP) LEADER SEAGA WROTE A LETTER TO THE ELECTORAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, GLADSTONE MILLS, ON MARCH 26, STATING THAT THE NECESSITY FOR MID-YEAR ELECTIONS HAD NOW BECOME SO STRONG THAT HE WILLING TO FOREGO THE USE OF A PHOTO-IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM TO REGISTER VOTERS. THE OLD SYSTEM WOULD SUFFICE ALONG WITH INDELIBLE INK TO PREVENT ULTIPLE VOTING. SEAGA ALSO CALLED FOR THE USE OF NEUTRAL ELECTION OBSERVERS FROM THE OAS, THE UN OR THE COMMON WEALTH.
3. (U) ON MARCH 28 MANLEY WROTE A LETTER TO MILLS SECONDING SEAGA'S GENERAL PROPOSAL FOR AN EARLY ELECTION AND PARTICULARLY ENDORSING THE CALL FOR ELIMINATION OF THE PHOTO-ID SYSTEM. MANLEY THEN REITERATED HIS SUPPORT FOR A MIDSUMMER ELECTION

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IN HIS MARCH 30 SPEECH TO THE NATION, THAT SAME DAY VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE MINISTER ISAACS, REMARKED ON HOW THEY WOULD SPEND THE MONEY SAVED BY DROPPING THE ID SYSTEM.

4, (U) MILLS REPLIED IN A LETTER TO MANLEY ON MARCH 30, SAYING THAT HIS COMMITTEE WOULD CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME. MEANWHILE, HE NOTED THE STATEMENTS ABOUT SPENDING THE MONEY SAVIED ON ID EQUIPMENT AND INQUIRED WHAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE DONE ABOUT COMMITMENTS TO SUPPLY EQUIPMENT FOR THE SYSTEM(COMMENT: A SONCTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED WITH A BRITISH COMPANY). HE ALSO ASKED MANLEY TO COMMENT ON SEAGA'S OTHER POINTS. MANLEY QUICKLY REPLIED, THE NEXT DAY, REJECTING SEAGA'S CALL FOR OUTSIDE OBSERVERS AS "AN INSULT TO OUR SOVEREIGNTY". HE ALSO SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD LOOK INTO THE COMMITMENT TO SUPPLY THE ID SYSTEM WITH A "SCRUPULOUS REGARD FOR THE LEGAL LIABILITIES

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THAT MAY BE INVOLVED."

5. (C) COMMENT: AND SO IT SEEMS JAMAICA WILL HAVE A JULY OR AUGUST ELECTION (JULY 31 IS THE DATE BEING TALKED OF IN PARLIAMENT). SINCE BOTH PARTIES AGREE IT SEEMS UNLIKELY MILLS WILL OBJECT, THOUGH WE KNOWN HE IS NOT PLEASED AS THE ELECTION SYSTEM WILL STILL HAVE MANY FLAWS. HOWEVER, WE CAUTION THAT THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE LEFT WING OF THE PNP IS NOT AT ALL HAPPY ABOUT HAVING EARLY ELECTIONS. THE ENTHUSIASTIC ENDORSEMENT OF SEAGA'S PROPOSAL SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN A MANLEY INITIATIVE (THERE WERE NO PNP MEETINGS DURING THE LETTER-WRITING EXERCISE) -PERHAPS A BOD TO RAGAIN SOME OF THE AUTHORITY HE LOST AS A RESULT OF REJECTING THE IMF. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT, IF ANYTHING THE LEFT WILL DO ABOUT MANLEY'S DECISION.

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